

Committee of Thirteen Report

August 8, 2006

The Committee of Thirteen of the Benton County Quorum Court met Tuesday, August 8, 2006 at 5:00 P.M. in the Quorum Court Room, County Administration Building, Third Floor, 215 East Central, Bentonville, Arkansas.

9 JPs Present:	Adams, Harrison, Moore, Sampier, Schindler, Sheridan, Stephenson, Summers, Tharp
4 Absent:	Allen, Hill, Wolf, Wozniak
Others Present:	County Judge Gary Black, Assessor Shirley Sandlin, Ed Gartin, Barbara Ludwig, Dennis Greenlee
Media:	Jennifer Turner – Daily Record, James Bowie – Morning News

JP Tim Summers called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Ordinance Request – Amend Schedule 4 – Personnel Reorganizations

JP Summers stated that the Finance Committee turned down all mid-year requests for additional personnel based on the fact that they could be facing a \$3.5 million loss of revenue if Bella Vista incorporates in November. Human Resources Director Barbara Ludwig listed the requests that had not been approved, and explained the reorganization requests from the Sheriff's Office, Collector, Assessor, Legal Department and Road Department, along with two wage adjustments requested by Juvenile Detention and the Road Department.

JP Sampier asked if consideration had been given to staffing the Rogers office. JP Summers stated that would be addressed in the budget process. JP Summers recognized Assessor Shirley Sandlin who gave an update on the Rogers office, and stated that the positions she had requested and that were turned down were for the purpose of staffing that office, and she needs them this year. JP Summers asked if they had approved a budget for the new building in Rogers. Shirley Sandlin stated that nothing has been approved by the Quorum Court, and they are still waiting for the Rogers City Attorney to complete the lease agreement. She said they have done all they can do at this point, and had originally intended to be in the new office by the first of September. She said that several approvals would have to take place before they could open the office, and she did not want to spend more money if they were not going to have people to staff the office. JP Summers stated that he supported the new location.

JP Stephenson made motion to forward the draft Ordinance with the proposed personnel reorganizations to the August 24, 2006 Quorum Court meeting, seconded by JP Sheridan. JP Tharp stated that they are spending \$57,468, but are not increasing personnel. He asked if the two wage adjustments are included in that figure. Barbara Ludwig stated that they are not. JP Adams stated that the \$57,000 is spread among 14 positions. Motion passed 8 votes in favor, 1 vote against, (JP Tharp).

Assessor Shirley Sandlin was recognized and stated that she needs three additional people to staff the Rogers office. Barbara Ludwig stated that Collector Greg Hoggatt also needs another person for the Rogers office. JP Sheridan asked if the Rogers location had to come before the Quorum Court

for approval. JP Summers stated that the County Judge has the authority to sign the lease, but that the Court would have to approve any money being spent. JP Sheridan stated that Shirley Sandlin is paying the other costs associated with the building out of her budget, but would need Quorum Court approval for more personnel. JP Summers asked if there would be any other costs that they needed to look at. Shirley Sandlin stated that she was not aware of anything except possibly the utilities, and she did not know what the staffing needs of the County Clerk are. JP Stephenson asked if the office will still be needed if Bella Vista incorporates. Shirley Sandlin stated that they deal with people and property, and the volume will not decrease if Bella Vista incorporates. JP Summers asked if she would need any other adjustments to her budget. Shirley Sandlin stated that her budget was fine through the end of 2006. JP Adams asked Collector Greg Hoggatt how many people he anticipated needing in the Rogers office in 2007. Gregg Hoggatt stated that they would wait a year and monitor the traffic count. He said it may depend on whether or not the Department of Finance and Administration decides to put an office in the building, and they are still waiting to hear from them. JP Sheridan stated that these are commissioned accounts, and made motion to approve the addition of one position in the Collector's Office and three positions in the Assessor's Office, and forward the recommendation to the August 24, 2006 Quorum Court meeting, seconded by JP Sampier. Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

2. Resolution Request – Policy Waivers Various Positions – Wage Adjustments

JP Sampier made motion to forward the proposed Resolution with a do pass recommendation to the August 24, 2006 Quorum Court meeting, seconded by JP Adams. Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

JP Summers stated that he wanted to make sure everyone understood why they did not fund any of the General Fund requests for personnel since three of the members of the Quorum Court had voted in favor of them. He said that with the looming Bella Vista situation, it was his opinion that they should not be adding any new jobs because it is possible that they may have to cut personnel. JP Stephenson stated that it was the general consensus of the Finance Committee that the positions requested were meritorious of nature, and there was no doubt they were needed, and subsequent to the outcome of the vote on November 11 they will reassess the situation. JP Moore pointed out that the Finance Committee vote was to fund the first three positions ranked on the General Fund list. JP Tharp and JP Sampier spoke in favor of readdressing the requests at the appropriate time. JP Stephenson stated that whether or not Bella Vista incorporates has no bearing on the degree of need for all of the positions. JP Summers stated that he agreed, but if they have to start cutting the budget, they will have to decide priorities and he would rather wait to add new positions than have to cut them later. JP Tharp stated that he agreed that the need would not be decreased, but he voted against the \$57,000 increase in personnel reorganizations because they do not know what is going to happen.

3. Resolution Request – Salary Range Waiver for Director of Planning and Development

JP Adams made motion to forward the Resolution to the August 24, 2006 Quorum Court meeting, seconded by JP Sampier. JP Summers stated that the concern of the Finance Committee had been whether or not that amount of money was sufficient. JP Stephenson asked County Judge Gary Black if after receiving several applications he still felt that the salary range was sufficient. County Judge Gary Black stated that they have received 8 applications, and felt the salary was OK. He added that they hoped to start interviews next week. JP Sampier stated that they can always revisit the salary if it becomes a sticking point in the negotiations. Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

4. Purchase of ADT Security System in Prosecuting Attorney's Office

JP Stephenson made motion to approve the purchase of the ADT security system in the Prosecuting Attorney's office, and for it to be included in the year end budget adjustment ordinance, seconded by JP Tharp. Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

5. Caterpillar Bid for Road Grader Buy Back – Road Department

JP Adams made motion to forward the proposal to accept the J.A. Riggs Tractor Company bid to the August 24, 2006 Quorum Court meeting, seconded by JP Tharp. Dennis Greenlee stated that they were at the end of the 5 year buyout period on 11 road graders purchased in 2001, and had been approached by Caterpillar with a proposal to purchase the graders for \$45,500 more than the original 2001 purchase price. He said that the warranty expires in December of this year, and the total is \$417,000 for 11 new graders. He said they are considering financing options, or the possibility of buying them outright. JP Summers stated that he wanted to be sure the Road Department amortizes the expense over 4 or 5 years, so there will be a zero balance at the end of the time period. JP Sheridan stated that it makes no difference which way Bella Vista goes in this case, because the graders are needed more in the rest of the county. JP Stephenson asked JP Summers to give an explanation of the buy back program. JP Summers gave a summary of how the buy back program works. Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

6. Quorum Court Policy Regarding Grant Applications

JP Summers stated that the Finance Committee had discussed the process which is used to apply for grants. He read from the Benton County Code of Ordinances which stated that a Resolution is not required if there is no county match, or if the county is not entering a contractual obligation. He said it was telling them that if there is no money involved, although some grant applications require an ordinance as part of the application.

OTHER BUSINESS:

JP Summers stated that the Annual Arkansas Association of Counties Convention is being held in Springdale, and asked if any JPs would be interested in attending along with JP Sheridan. JP Sheridan stated that he would report back to the Quorum Court as usual.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

JP Summers announced that the next Quorum Court meeting would be August 24, 2006 at 5:00 p.m.

JP Adams stated that his brother has been reassigned to Baghdad, and asked for continued prayers.

JP Moore announced that the Long Range Planning/Properties & Equipment Committee would be meeting August 20, 2006 at 5:30 p.m., and the Environmental Committee meeting would be meeting August 15, 2006 at 5:00 p.m.

County Attorney Ed Gartin stated that he had taken vacation time, but wanted the record to reflect that he was definitely not on vacation.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.